

## **What should I do when my child does not follow directions?**

Carefully consider your child's age and experience when giving directions. Demonstrate the appropriate way to follow directions and reward your child with verbal praise, a kiss, a hug, or having a friend over to play.

Make sure that your child sees the relationship between their behavior and the consequences which may follow. Allow natural consequences to occur due to your child's failure to follow directions. For example, when a child fails to bring their bike at night, it might get stolen.

Do not give directions from another room. Go to your child, get their undivided attention, and tell them what to do. Make sure that your child is paying attention when you are telling them something and have them repeat it to ensure that they understand. Provide an incentive statement with your directions, "You may watch TV after you get ready for bed."

In order to help your child follow directions, reduce distractions by turning off video games or the TV in order to obtain their attention. Deliver directions in a supportive way rather than a threatening way. For example: You can say "Please take out the trash" instead of "You had better take out the trash or else!"

Do not give your child directions with more than two or three steps because it may become confusing and make it more difficult for your child to following them. Be consistent when expecting your child to follow directions.